entation of Pakistan's nuclear programme, estimates vary about the exact quantum of material and components acquired.

(b) Government constantly monitor all developments having a bearing on India's security and take all necessary measures to safeguard it.

Sethu Samudharam Canal Project

*158. SHRI K. K. VEERAPPAN:
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government propose to implement the Sethu Samudhram Canal Project; and

(b) if so, what is the total estimated cost for the implementation of this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) No final decision as yet has been taken on the project.

Death of handloom weavers in Andhra Pradesh

*159. SHRI MENTARY PADMANABHAM:
SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of starvation deaths that have taken place among the handloom weavers in Andhra Pradesh from September, 1991 to November 15, 1991;

(b) what financial and other assistance will be rendered to the next of kin of the deceased;

(c) whether Government propose to send a team to Andhra Pradesh to enquire into their tragic conditions, if so, the details thereof;

(d) what steps have been taken by Government to ensure their full and continuous employment at reasonable wages to improve their living conditions; and

(e) whether there is a proposal to entrust at least 50 per cent of the textile requirements of the consuming Departments of Government to the Primary Weavers' Cooperative on conversion basis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) Seventy six deaths of weavers including seven deaths due to suicide have been reported by Government of Andhra Pradesh during this period. These deaths have been attributed to various reasons including prolonged illness, old age, addiction to alcohol, etc.

(b) State Government is organising a relief of Rs. 5000/- per family of the deceased weavers through local organisations. State Government has also agreed to provide production oriented consumption loan through Bank to the affected weavers at Rs. 1000/- per family. Medical teams have also been despatched to the affected districts to provide assistance to the members of weaver families.

(c) In the wake of reports of starvation deaths, the Central Government deputed two separate teams of officers to assess the situation on the spot and to take necessary remedial action. The following measures are contemplated with a view to ameliorate the conditions of handloom weavers in Andhra Pradesh:-

(i) Provision of additional assistance of Rs. 16.00 lakhs over and above the State's normal MDA entitlement to enable the State Apex Handloom Weavers Cooperative Society (APCO) to undertake procurement of an additional two crores worth of goods within the period ending March '92 from the weavers including those working outside the cooperative/corporate sector in the affected districts of Andhra Pradesh;

(ii) Allocation of additional target of 5 million square metres of janata cloth with a provision of advance of Rs. 127.50 lakhs for production in the affected districts in order to provide sustained employment to janata weavers;

(iii) Provision of insurance cover for an amount of Rs. 10,000/- per weaver for 12000 weavers in the affected districts. As an exceptional measure while the weaver will not be required to pay anything towards the premium, Government's liability will be of the order of Rs. 14.40 lakhs this year to be shared between centre and State; and

(iv) Programme of intensive training to about 300 handloom weavers to begin with in the districts of Guntur and Prakasam. Under this scheme each weaver will be paid a stipend of Rs. 350/- per month during the training period of four months.

(d) In order to ensure continuous empolyment at reasonable wages and to improve the socio-economic conditions of weavers, the Government have been making efforts through the following measures in all the States of the country including Andhra Pradesh:—

(i) Financial assistance for modernisation of looms;

(ii) Scheme of decentralise training to train weavers on improved technology;

(iii) Scheme of training a cadre of 'Bunkar Sevaks' for assisting weavers in transfer of improved technology;

(iv) Protection to handloom by reserving certain varieties of cloth for their exclusive production in the handloom sector;

(v) Design support and provision of technological inputs through a number of Weavers' Service Centres in the country;

(vi) Special fiscal concessions to the handloom sector to remove the cost handicap of handlooms vis-a-vis the powerlooms;

(vii) Thrift Fund Scheme;

(viii) Market Development Assistance Scheme; and

(ix) The Janata Cloth Scheme under which it is ensured that reasonable level of wages is paid to handloom weavers.

Government has also announced a new Scheme entitled "Margin Money for Destitute Weavers" to be implemented during the current financial year for the benefit of handloom weavers living below poverty line.

(e) Central Government purchases handloom goods for use in their Ministries/Departments from handloom sector through the Association of Corporations and Apex Societies of Handlooms (ACASH) on Single Tender System basis. The Government of Andhra Pradesh have also restored their original orders to purchase 50 percent of the requirements of Government Departments from APCO.

Development of Adventure Tourism in India

*160. SNRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Ministe of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to promote adventure tourism;

(b) if so, what promotional measures have been adopted by Government so far;

(c) what schemes have been drawn up by Government to promote adventure tourism in the country during the Eighth Plan period; and

(d) what steps have been taken or proposed to be taken in this direction in Orissa?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The 8th Plan has not yet been finalised. However, during the 7th Plan period, the Department had extend-